

Message Text

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SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE RE PANAMA CANAL TREATIES

THERE FOLLOWS A NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE, DATELINED APRIL 11,
OF APRIL 12, ENTITLED "SENATOR TO PROPOSE STRONGER U.S.
RIGHT TO PATROL PANAMA. DECONCINI SAYS HE WANTS CLAUSE
ALLOWING THE IMMEDIATE USE OF TROOPS TO KEEP CANAL OPEN".

BEGIN QUOTE: SENATOR DECONCINI, WHO HAS ALREADY SUCCEEDED
IN ATTACHING ONE CONTROVERSIAL RESERVATION TO THE PANAMA
CANAL TREATIES, SAID TODAY THAT HE WOULD PROPOSE A PRO-
VISION GIVING THE UNITED STATES AN IMMEDIATE RIGHT TO SEND
TROOPS ANYWHERE IN PANAMA TO KEEP THE CANAL OPEN.

QUOTE: MR. DECONCINI SAID HE SAW NO NEED TO MODIFY HIS
RESERVATION TO THE TREATY GUARANTEEING THE CANAL'S NEU-
TRALITY, WHICH WAS APPROVED MARCH 16. THE RESERVATION
ASSERTS AN AMERICAN RIGHT TO INTERVENE UNILATERALLY IN
PANAMA IF THE CANAL'S OPERATION IS EVER THREATENED, EVEN
BY A STRIKE, AFTER THE YEAR 2000.

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QUOTE: THAT EARLIER CHANGE STIRRED A STORM OF PROTEST IN
PANAMA, AND THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN SEEKING A
WAY TO WEAKEN IT, FEARING THAT IT MIGHT CAUSE PANAMA TO
REJECT THE TREATIES.

QUOTE: BUT BECAUSE OF THE THIN MARGIN OF VICTORY ON THE
FIRST TREATY, THE ADMINISTRATION HAS MOVED GINGERLY, NOT

WANTING TO LOSE MR. DECONCINI'S VOTE OR THOSE OF ANY SENATORS WHO MIGHT FOLLOW HIM WHEN THE BASIC TREATY, WHICH WOULD TURN THE CANAL OVER TO PANAMA BY THE YEAR 2000, COMES TO A VOTE ON APRIL 18.

QUOTE: TOMORROW HE WILL MEET WITH PRESIDENT CARTER, WHO WILL BE TRYING TO CONVINCE THE FRESHMAN SENATOR OF THE PROBLEMS HIS FIRST RESERVATION CAUSED AND THE POTENTIALLY GREATER ONES POSED BY HIS NEW EFFORT TO ASSERT A RIGHT TO SEND TROOPS TO PANAMA THAT THE UNITED STATES FORMALLY GAVE UP IN 1936.

QUOTE: IN PANAMA TODAY, THE GOVERNMENT, HAVING SUCCESSFULLY DRAWN ATTENTION TO ITS ANGER OVER THE SENATE'S RESERVATIONS, ASSUMED A LESS AGGRESSIVE STANCE TO ALLOW TIME FOR A COMPROMISE BEFORE THE SENATE VOTE NEXT WEEK.

QUOTE: IN THE SENATE, WHERE TREATY PROPONENTS GRUMBLED ABOUT MR. DECONCINI'S SUDDEN EMINENCE AND INFLUENCE, THE TASK OF DEALING WITH THE ARIZONAN HAS BEEN LEFT TO SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD, THE MAJORITY LEADER.

QUOTE: EVEN TREATY FOES SUCH AS SENATOR PAUL LAXALT, REPUBLICAN OF NEVADA, EXPRESSED AMAZEMENT AT THE APPARENT IMPASSE AMONG A FRESHMAN SENATOR, THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION AND THE GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA, A SITUATION THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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HAS SUDDENLY RAISED THEIR HOPES OF EITHER DEFEATING THE PACT IN THE SENATE OR SEEING IT SPURNED BY PANAMA.

QUOTE: AT THE CAPITOL, THE SITUATION REMAINED CONFUSED, AS SENATORS AND REPORTERS CONTINUALLY ASKED EACH OTHER WHAT WAS GOING ON, AND EXCHANGED VERSIONS OF POSSIBLE LANGUAGE CONCERNING THE TREATIES AND ACCOUNTS OF NEGOTIATIONS THAT HAVE LED UP TO THEM. SENATOR EDWARD W. BROOKE, REPUBLICAN OF MASSACHUSETTS, COMPLAINED PUBLICLY THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAD MISLED THE SENATE BY NOT CONVEYING PANAMA'S OBJECTIONS TO MR. DECONCINI'S FIRST RESERVATION.

QUOTE: MR. DECONCINI IS ALSO SEEKING TO CLARIFY ONE SECTION OF THE BASIC TREATY TO MAKE SURE THAT IF CANAL PROFITS DO NOT REACH LEVELS EXPECTED BY PANAMA THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT HAVE TO MAKE UP THE DIFFERENCE IN 2000.

QUOTE: HE SAID HIS PURPOSE IN GOING TO SEE MR. CARTER TOMORROW WAS SIMPLE: 'IF HE'LL ACCEPT THESE TWO AMENDMENTS OF MIND, I'LL VOTE FOR THE SECOND TREATY'. UNQUOTE. VANCE

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